



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

November 5, 2009

The Honorable W. Craig Fugate
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Fugate,

Thank you for your response to my August 5, 2009 letter. I appreciate the efforts you and your agency have made in beginning to address the problems incident to the preliminary Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map for Cumberland County, Maine, which updates flood hazard information for Portland Harbor.


I am glad to hear that regional FEMA officials and representatives from the City of Portland have been meeting and the dialogue between FEMA and the City has continued. I continue to encourage you to work closely with the City and improve coordination and collaboration as FEMA moves forward with assessing the data and risk of flooding facing the Portland waterfront.

The accurate portrayal of the risk of flooding in Portland Harbor is necessary so that commerce connected to the Portland Waterfront can continue safely and uninterrupted. The uncertainty created by impending changes to the flood plan map creates a sense of uneasiness on the waterfront. I encourage FEMA to continue working towards publishing a new Flood Insurance Rate Map that incorporates the best data possible to help sooth this uneasiness.

It is my understanding that Portland provided your agency with new information about historical and environmental conditions in the Harbor and I appreciate that you are using this data to improve the accuracy of the risk assessment. I am, however, concerned that the City and not FEMA had to generate this data. It is troubling that you are willing to place the burden and expense of providing data that will improve the accuracy of the risk assessment on the City of Portland and ultimately, its taxpayers. In the spirit of coordination and cooperation, the City is helping you gather the best data possible so that FEMA can make the best and most accurate determination of the actual risk faced by the waterfront. FEMA should also be an active partner in the development of this data.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress